

Sen. Long to Ask Airing Of Bugging Controversy

By Richard Harwood
Washington Post Staff Writer

12/12/66

Sen. Edward V. Long (D-Mo.) announced yesterday that he would ask FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Senator Robert F. Kennedy to testify publicly on their controversy over the FBI's eavesdropping practices.

"Now that the ice is broken," Long said, "the public certainly has a right to know all of the facts."

Long proposed that the hearings be conducted by his Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure which has been looking into Federal invasions of privacy, including wiretapping, for the past two years.

He learned on his arrival from Europe yesterday of the dispute that broke into the open during the weekend between Hoover and Kennedy. At issue is whether Kennedy, as Attorney General, authorized the FBI to engage in electronic espionage on a national scale. Hoover claims that he did. Kennedy denies it.

Long said his subcommittee staff received documents from the FBI yesterday which had a "bearing on the subject." But he said he wanted the public testimony of Hoover, Kennedy and other past and present "high officials" of the Justice Department. They would presumably include Acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark and former Attor-

ney General Nicholas DeB. Katzenbach who is now the Under Secretary of State.

"We have been extremely reluctant in the past," Long said, "to call officials from the FBI and the Justice Department because we did not want to do any possible harm

See BUG, A9, Col. 1

BUG—From Page A1

Sen. Long to Ask Airing Of Bugging Controversy

to national security or the drive on organized crime.

"But now that some of the principal participants have opened up these matters we feel that an on-the-record hearing is necessary."

'Invitations' to Hearings

Long said he hoped the hearings could begin "as soon as practical" after Congress convenes. He said "invitations" as opposed to subpoenas would be issued to prospective witnesses such as Kennedy and Hoover.

The angry Kennedy-Hoover quarrel erupted Saturday with the release of a Hoover letter to Rep. H. R. Gross (R-Iowa) in which the FBI director said Kennedy had authorized the agency to use electronic "bugs."

Kennedy immediately issued a denial, and insisted that he was unaware of the "bugging" operation that has jeopardized Justice Department prosecutions against such figures as Robert G. "Bobby" Baker, former secretary to the Senate majority.

Hoover fired his second round Sunday. He released documents from the FBI files showing, Hoover said, "that the FBI's use of microphone and wiretap surveillances was known to and approved by Mr. Kennedy."

Denial Repeated

Kennedy repeated his denial, claimed that Hoover was "misinformed" and demanded that the FBI release its entire file.

The FBI declined that request yesterday as the controversy widened.

The White House and the Justice Department refused, for the time being, to be drawn into it. Presidential spokesman George Christian said the White House had nothing to say except to point out that none of the incidents in controversy occurred under the Johnson Administration.

The Justice Department, caught unaware by Hoover's weekend tilt with Kennedy, said it would release no documents to clarify the crucial question of whether Kennedy had or had not given his approval for FBI eavesdropping in the Federal drive against organized crime from 1961 to 1964.

Supreme Court Justice Byron White was equally discreet. He served as Kennedy's deputy during most of the period in question but declined to make any statement.

Hundley Sheds Light

The only new light on the affair came from William G. Hundley, chief of the Justice Department's organized crime section from 1958 until late this year.

Hundley said he had never informed Kennedy that the FBI was using "bugs" and said the FBI had never sought his approval for the installation of "bugs" of the type employed in Las Vegas, Washington, Miami and other cities.

The Justice Department has admitted that the devices used in these cities were illegally installed because they involved physical trespass into rooms and offices occupied by men under surveillance.

Hundley said he did discuss with Hoover's men the use of legal "bugs" such as recorders hidden on informants.

'Departmental Practice'

In general, Justice Department officials have taken the position that Hoover as a matter of "departmental practice" was authorized to use electronic devices. But they have also said that they were unaware of how extensively the devices were being used.

Hoover, however, insists that Kennedy was fully aware of the nature and scope of the practice and that it had "intensified" with his knowledge during his tenure as Attorney General.

"I certainly take the responsibility for it," Kennedy said Sunday, "but the plain fact of the matter is that I did not know."

The Long subcommittee has taken a negative position on electronic "snooping" by government agencies and Long has prepared legislation to prohibit it.

But Long said yesterday that in view of the Hoover-Kennedy conflict and the problems it brought out into the open that he may withhold introduction of his bill until after hearings are conducted.

Yule Tree Fete

RICHMOND, Dec. 12 (AP) Gov. Mills E. Godwin will turn on the lights decorating the State Christmas tree Monday afternoon. Ceremonies on the south Portico of the State Capitol will start at 5 p.m.